

To: Sally Butts[sbutts@blm.gov]; Peter Mali[pmali@blm.gov]
From: Nelson, Britta
Sent: 2017-04-27T13:09:59-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Update re: DTS# 1397--NOI for Supplement to the Draft RMP for the Southern Nevada District (Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices) and Gold Butte National Monument
Received: 2017-04-27T13:10:49-04:00
[Nol SoNevada-GBNM Supplemental Draft RMP 1.9.17 \(2\).docx](#)
[briefingmemo6SoNVSupplementalRMP_wo210edits.docx.docx](#)
[BriefingPaper-SupplementtoRMP-SND01.docx.docx](#)
[SNDOSupplementtoDraftRMPEISCommunicationPlan1.9.171.docx.docx](#)
[Briefing Paper Departmental Nol So Nevada Suppl RMP.docx](#)
[SND0 Supplement to Draft RMP DRAFT NEWS RELEASE 1-11-17 mmc \(1\).docx](#)

Hi Sally and Peter, I spoke with Nathan Morris who is the WO210 planning liaison to Nevada on a follow-up item Nevada had on one of our comments on the NOI for the Southern Nevada Supplement to the DRMP and Gold Butte NM (DTS# 1397). The follow up is in reference to our comment in the NOI briefing paper to identify the units of the National Conservation Lands that are in the planning area. The comment was made under item #11 which asks if there is other pertinent information to help the reader understand the action. Because the NOI briefing paper has already been signed by the SD, Nevada wants to avoid making changes to the NOI briefing paper that would require another SD signature, and wanted to see if the information in the NOI briefing memo re: the National Conservation Lands would suffice.

Nathan and I looked at the language in the NOI briefing memo. I told him I thought we could bolster the language there and not make the edit in the NOI briefing paper since the purpose of the comment is to make sure this information is contained in the notice materials, but I'd need to check with you. Nathan indicated that Nevada will/is updating the language in the NOI briefing memo to call out what types of units of the National Conservation Lands are in the planning area and addressed by the plan as well as identify that lands with wilderness characteristics are addressed in the plan.

Please let me know if there are any issues with this approach (putting the information we requested in the NOI briefing memo rather than the NOI briefing paper) and I will confirm with WO210. Thanks.

Britta Nelson, M.P.A., Program Analyst
National Conservation Lands (WO-410)
Bureau of Land Management
303.236.0539

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Nelson, Britta** <bknelson@blm.gov>
Date: Mon, Apr 24, 2017 at 10:13 AM

Subject: Surname Recommended: DTS# 1397--NOI for Supplement to the Draft RMP for the Southern Nevada District (Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices) and Gold Butte National Monument

To: Sally Butts <sbutts@blm.gov>, Peter Mali <pmali@blm.gov>

Cc: Timothy Fisher <tjfisher@blm.gov>, Robert Wick <rwick@blm.gov>, "Bailey, Cathi M" <c1bailey@blm.gov>, "Salt, Deborah A" <debsalt@blm.gov>

Hi Sally and Peter, surname is recommended for DTS# 1397, NOI for the Supplement to the DRMP for the Southern Nevada District (Las Vegas and Pahrump) and the Gold Butte National Monument.

Feedback provided in the notice documents includes:

1. The communication plan has been updated to include reference to the 2012 6220 manual rather than the 2010 IM, with a comment that this approach (combining plans with separate RODs) is specifically identified as a planning option in BLM Manual 6220.
2. For the notice briefing paper, a punctuation error was corrected and a comment was made asking for the briefing paper to identify the units of the National Conservation Lands that are in the planning area.
3. Correction was made to a M6220 reference in the briefing memo.
4. Made a comment in the briefing memo to please identify the public scoping and overall engagement process that will focus on parties interested in GBNM.
5. Made a comment in the briefing memo asking if prominent issues have been identified for the GBNM and if they should be listed.

The updated communication plan, briefing memo, and notice briefing paper have been uploaded into DTS and are attached with the other notice documents. The WO410 BP on the supplement has also been shared with you. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks.

[Southern NV supplement to DRMP_Gold Butte_WO410...](#)

Britta Nelson, M.P.A., Program Analyst
National Conservation Lands (WO-410)
Bureau of Land Management
303.236.0539

On Fri, Apr 14, 2017 at 12:27 PM, Nelson, Britta <bknelson@blm.gov> wrote:

National Conservation Lands, your review is requested of DTS# 1397, NOI for the Supplement to the DRMP for the Southern Nevada District (Las Vegas and Pahrump) and the Gold Butte National Monument. Please

provide feedback in the notice documents in google drive (using the "suggestions" mode) by April 19. In addition to the notice documents, the WO410 briefing papers for the combining of the plans and for the WO410 DRMP review from 2014 have been shared with you.

I reviewed and provided some feedback on the notice documents:

1. The communication plan has been updated to include reference to the 2012 6220 manual rather than the 2010 IM, with a comment that this approach (combining plans with separate RODs) is specifically identified as a planning option in BLM Manual 6220.
2. The NOA discusses hierarchical mitigation strategies so I made a comment asking if the revocation of Secretarial Order 3330, Improving Mitigation Policies and Practices of the Department of the Interior, affects this.
3. For the notice briefing paper, a punctuation error was corrected and a comment was made asking for the briefing paper to identify the units of the National Conservation Lands that are in the planning area.
4. Correction was made to a M6220 reference in the briefing memo.
5. Made a comment in the briefing memo to please identify the public scoping and overall engagement process that will focus on parties interested in GBNM.
6. Made a comment in the briefing memo asking if prominent issues have been identified for the GBNM and if they should be listed.

As a reminder, as agreed at the March 22 meeting with Nevada and WO210:

- A revised Briefing Statement for the Federal Register NOI package will be sent to the WO and will include a specific section highlighting the public scoping and overall engagement process with a focus on parties interested in GBNM and will note the WO410/WO210/Nevada meeting held to discuss the planning approach.
- Completion of the District-wide RMP will incorporate GBNM issues within the Special Designationssection of the RMP.
- GBNM will have a separate Record of Decision.
- Additional field work for lands with wilderness characteristics will occur in the Gold Butte area.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks.

Britta Nelson, M.P.A., Program Analyst
National Conservation Lands (WO-410)
Bureau of Land Management
303.236.0539

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <DTS@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Apr 12, 2017 at 2:15 PM
Subject: DTS Assignment--Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft RMP for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte NM
To: awest@blm.gov, bknelson@blm.gov, c1bailey@blm.gov, debsalt@blm.gov, icohen@blm.gov, jsippel@blm.gov, k55davis@blm.gov, nmoore@blm.gov, rhawks@blm.gov, rwootton@blm.gov, sbutts@blm.gov

Hello and welcome to the DTS automated email alert!

Your office (WO-410 NLCS DIVISION) has a task assigned.

Please log in to the Data Tracking System at the following URL Address:
<https://dts.fws.gov/dts/preLogin.do?officeId=4576> and review Document Control Number (DCN)** BLMR001397.

To move the document to the next office in the routing process, enter your surname information for your office's task and save the record.

Document Subject: Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft RMP for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte NM

Synopsis: A commitment for Fed Reg NoI publication on 19th January originated from Janice Schneider, Asst. Secretary ASLM

Action Required: 3-Surname

Assigned By Office: WO-200 User: Steve Tryon

Thank you.

Briefing Paper

1. State Office

Nevada

2. What is the title of this notice?

Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument

3. What are the key issues raised by the underlying decision documents for this notice?

Solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio economics. Issues specific to Gold Butte National Monument, designated by Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016.

4. Who are the primary users affected by or parties interested in the underlying decisions or actions? What are their concerns?

Environmental Groups resource concerns
Solar Industry solar energy development potential
Recreation limitation/expansion of recreation opportunities
Local Governments socioeconomic impacts, land allocations
State Agencies socioeconomic impacts, land allocations
Tribal Governments tribal and tribal resource impacts
Water Districts water use issues

5. Is tribal consultation appropriate under E.O. 13175 or other authorities? Will the proposed action potentially impact tribes or tribal lands, or generate their interest? If so, what consultation or other communication/outreach are you planning?

Yes. The proposed actions on the RMP should not directly affect tribes or tribal lands. Tribal Consultation letters should be sent to the following Tribes:

Cedar Band, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Kaibab Paiute Tribe
Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
Kanosh Band, Paiute Indian Tribes of Utah
Colorado River Indian Tribes
Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Moapa Band of Paiutes

Hualapai Tribal Council
*Pahrump Paiute Tribe
Indian Peaks Band, Piute Indian Tribes of Utah
Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
Inter Tribal Council of Nevada

*Not a federally recognized tribe

6. Will this notice be controversial?

Yes. Environmental groups and the solar industry have expressed concern over the identification of new Solar Energy Zones. The two County governments have expressed concern that the reduction in areas for disposal would limit future urban development opportunities. Depending on the stakeholder perspective, designation of ACECs may allow for additional protection of natural resources (mainly sensitive species or cultural sites) or be considered a hindrance to energy development, recreation, rights of ways, and/or lands for disposal. The designation of Gold Butte National Monument is also controversial.

7. What will the underlying decision or action change? (Summarize changes to policy, management practices, allowable uses, differences between draft and final, etc.)

This action is only to announce the intent to prepare a supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS and announce the initiation of the public scoping process.

8. Will this notice need communications materials, e.g., a press release, communication plan? If so, enclose these materials with the notice package submitted.

Yes. Communication materials are included.

9. What are the reasons for the timing of the notice and the consequence, if any, of delaying or canceling the release?

Canceling the notice would prevent the Supplemental RMP/EIS project from proceeding forward.

10. How has this been analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

This action is to initiate the scoping process for an EIS.

11. Is there any additional pertinent, descriptive information that reviewers need to know or would increase understanding?

Throughout the planning area some lands designated for special use by BLM have been proposed to Congress for disposal.

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12. List the names and positions of the people who have prepared, reviewed, and approved the notice and the underlying decisions and documents.

Southern Nevada District

John Asselin, Public Affairs
Tim Smith, District Manager
Erick Kurkowski, Associate District Manager

Las Vegas Field Office

Gayle Marrs Smith, Field Manager
James Kirk, Project Manager

Pahrump Field Office

Deborah MacNeill, Field Manager
Susan Farkas, Planning and Environmental Coordinator

Nevada State Office

David Pritchett, Planning and Compliance
Steve Clutter, Chief of Communications
Chris Rose, Public Affairs Specialist
Marci Todd, Associate State Director
John Ruhs, State Director

13. Authorizing signature of State Office or Center Budget Officer, or Washington Office Resource Advisor certifying that the cost code on the Federal Register notice is accurate and valid.

(signature)

(print name and date)

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNV930000.L16100000.PN0000; 241A; MO#]

**Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan
and Associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southern Nevada
District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and
Gold Butte National Monument**

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southern Nevada District Office intends to prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and an associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, which encompasses the Las Vegas Field Office, the Pahrump Field Office, and the Gold Butte National Monument, and by this notice is announcing the beginning of the supplemental scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues specific to solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics. By this notice the BLM also is soliciting public comments on issues specific to Gold Butte National Monument, which was designated by Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016. The BLM is

preparing this Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS—initially made available for public comment on October 10, 2014—to address the specific issues listed above. Once completed, this RMP revision will replace the existing 1998 Las Vegas RMP.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process for the Supplemental Draft RMP and associated Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until [INSERT DATE 60+ DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers and the BLM website at: <http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>. In order to be included in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the 60-day scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the specific issues and planning criteria related to the Southern Nevada District Planning Area Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS by any of the following methods:

- Website: <http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>
- Email: sndo_rmp_revision@blm.gov
- Fax: 702-515-5023
- Mail: BLM-RMP Revision, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas NV 89130

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Southern Nevada District Office, Las Vegas, NV.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lee Kirk, RMP Team Lead, telephone 702-501-5026; address BLM-RMP Revision, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130; email sndo_rmp_revision@blm.gov. Contact Mr. Lee Kirk to add your name to our mailing list. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document provides notice that the BLM Southern Nevada District Office intends to prepare a Supplemental Draft RMP with an associated Supplemental Draft EIS for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, which encompasses the Las Vegas Field Office, the Pahrump Field Office, and the Gold Butte National Monument. This notice announces the beginning of the supplemental scoping process by which the BLM requests public input on solar energy zones and solar development, ACECs, lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics. Additionally, this supplemental scoping process will gather input on planning issues relating to implementing the Presidential Proclamation designating the Gold Butte National Monument. The planning area is located in Clark and Nye Counties, Nevada, and encompasses approximately 3.0 million acres of public land. The Planning Area does not include: private lands, State lands, Indian reservations, Federal lands not administered by the BLM, Nellis Test and Training Range (U.S. Air Force), or lands addressed in the Red Rock Canyon National

Conservation Area RMP (2005) and the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2006).

The purpose of the supplemental public scoping process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft RMP/EIS was made available in 2014 for public and cooperating agency review, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of the Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM final rule on competitive processes, terms, and conditions for leasing public lands for solar and wind energy development (81 FR 92122, December 19, 2016). Comments previously received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS. Relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process include the specific planning issues indicated above, as have been identified by BLM personnel; the Presidential Proclamation; Federal, State, and local agencies; Tribes; and other stakeholders. The BLM will also consider identifying opportunities to apply hierarchical mitigation strategies for regional and compensatory mitigation and identify areas appropriate to apply landscape-level conservation and management actions to achieve regional mitigation objectives (e.g. ACECs, priority habitat, etc.).

Preliminary planning criteria include, but are not limited to, those in the initial Draft RMP/EIS (made available October 10, 2014) and the Presidential Proclamation designating Gold Butte National Monument (December 28, 2016), in addition to: cultural resources, tribal values, vegetation resources, wild horse and burros, social and economic values, climate change, special areas (e.g., Gold Butte National Monument and ACECs),

visual resources, lands and realty, outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, minerals, paleontological resources, research, wildland fire, and military uses. Preliminary planning criteria will conform to 43 CFR 1610.4-2.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the “ADDRESSES” section above. To be most helpful, you should submit comments by the close of the 60-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. The BLM will evaluate identified issues to be addressed in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, and will place them into one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the RMP/EIS;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this RMP/EIS.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS as to why an issue was placed in category two or three. The public is also encouraged to help identify any management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The BLM will utilize and coordinate the NEPA scoping process to help fulfill the public involvement process under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) as provided in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about historic and cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed action will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources.

The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the planning and NEPA process: renewable energy, wilderness, socioeconomic, rangeland management, minerals and geology, outdoor recreation, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrogeology, soils, law enforcement, fire management planning.

AUTHORITY: 40 CFR 1501.7, 43 CFR 1610.2,

John F. Ruhs
State Director, Nevada



Southern Nevada District Office

FOR RELEASE: [DATE]

CONTACT: John Asselin (702) 515-5046; jasselin@blm.gov

BLM Seeks Public Input on Land Use in Southern Nevada

Bureau to prepare supplemental land management plan

Las Vegas – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southern Nevada District Office is seeking public input on specific land use and management issues in southern Nevada, including solar development, socioeconomics and lands with wilderness characteristics.

A notice published in the *Federal Register* today, announced the BLM's intent to prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument. Publication of the notice initiated a 90-day public scoping period that ends on [INSERT DATE].

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process for the supplemental RMP and EIS. During public scoping, interested members of the public are encouraged to provide input that will be used to identify issues specific to the supplement. Examples of these issues include solar energy zones, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and potential federal land disposals within the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices.

The BLM also is asking for public input regarding land management planning issues specific to Gold Butte National Monument, which was recently designated by Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016. Please note that the most useful comments are those that identify issues relevant to the supplemental RMP and EIS or contain new technical or scientific information.

Written input and comments will be accepted for until [INSERT DATE].

Written input and comments related to preparation of a supplement to the Draft RMP and associated Draft EIS for the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument will be accepted for until [INSERT DATE]. Comments may be submitted using any of the following methods:

- Website: <http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>
- Email: sndo_rmp_revision@blm.gov
- Fax: 702-515-5023
- Mail: BLM-RMP Revision, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130.

Before including an address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot

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guarantee that we will be able to do so. The BLM will not consider anonymous comments. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Documents pertinent to the preparation of the Draft RMP and associated Draft EIS for the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument are available in the Southern Nevada District Office at the above address or on the following website:
<http://tinyurl.com/qzvaht7>.

For further information concerning this scoping period please contact the BLM-Nevada Southern Nevada District Office at (XXX)XXX-XXXX. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above office during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

-BLM-

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Communication Plan

Southern Nevada District, Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan
and Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Southern Nevada District Office including Gold Butte National Monument

Introduction:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Southern Nevada District Office, is preparing a Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS that would replace the existing 1998 Las Vegas Field Office RMP.

The scope of the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS is limited to solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio economics within the geographic area covered by Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices, and, for the geographic area of Gold Butte National Monument, a broad range of planning issues relating to the Presidential Proclamation. The planning area is located in Clark and Nye Counties, Nevada, and encompasses approximately 3.0 million acres of public land. The Planning Area does not include: private lands, State lands, Indian reservations, Federal lands not administered by the BLM, Nellis Test and Training Range (U.S. Air Force), or lands addressed in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2005) and the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2006).

The purpose of the supplemental public scoping process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft RMP/EIS was made available in 2014 for public and cooperating agency review, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM Final Solar and Wind Rule (November 10, 2016). Comments already received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS will continue to be considered for the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS.

Key Messages:

Comments collected during the public scoping process in 2010, during which seven open houses were held to provide information and solicit public comments, were instrumental in determining the issues to be addressed. Below are the key issues that the Supplement to the Draft RMP/ Draft EIS will address:

- **Solar energy zones and solar development:** address concerns with identifying new Solar Energy Zones. Public workshops/meetings to address these issues are anticipated by BLM to be held in early 2017 as focused discussions during the scoping meetings.
- **Gold Butte National Monument:** the Monument was designated by Presidential Proclamation on December 28, 2016. The Proclamation indicates that a management plan will be prepared by BLM and it specifies certain management actions or options that will or will not apply to the Monument. BLM policy established in 2012 expressly allows the option for a National Monument management plan to be incorporated as a subset of a management plan under preparation for the surrounding BLM lands, which in this case is the ongoing RMP for Southern Nevada District. As directed in the proclamation, the

Revised Jan. 2017

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planning process will provide for maximum public involvement in the development of that plan including, but not limited to, consultation with State, tribal, and local governments.

- **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC):** analyze nominations, drop or adjust existing designations, and clarify management, including focused considerations for the portion of the “Gold Butte A” ACEC that remains outside the northern boundary of Gold Butte National Monument.
- **Lands and Realty:** reconsideration of land disposals.
- **Lands with Wilderness Characteristics:** determine areas that should be managed to maintain their wilderness characteristics based on the updated BLM inventory that was conducted to identify areas meeting wilderness characteristics and those areas that do not.

Interested Stakeholder and Public Groups:

Local Governments:

City of Henderson
City of Las Vegas
City of Mesquite
City of North Las Vegas
Boulder City
Town of Laughlin
Town of Searchlight
Moapa Valley Town Board
Bunkerville Town Board
Clark County
Nye County
Virgin River Water District

State Agencies:

Nevada Department of Wildlife
Nevada Division of State Lands
Nevada Governor's Office of Energy
Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

Federal Agencies:

National Park Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Forest Service
Department of Defense
Department of Energy
Federal Aviation Administration
Environmental Protection Agency

Tribal Governments:

Cedar Band, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Kaibab Paiute Tribe
Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
Kanosh Band, Paiute Indian Tribes of Utah
Colorado River Indian Tribes
Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Moapa Band of Paiutes

Hualapai Tribal Council
Pahrump Paiute Tribe (not a federally recognized tribe)
Indian Peaks Band, Piute Indian Tribes of Utah
Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
Inter Tribal Council of Nevada

Other:

Mojave Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council
Center for Biologic Diversity
Wilderness Society
Friends of Gold Butte
Partners In Conservation
Outside Las Vegas Foundation
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Defenders of Wildlife

Outreach Strategy:

Public outreach strategies will include standard and required methods, such as distribution of news releases and website posting. The BLM will perform outreach with the following groups:

- Cooperating agencies
- Mojave Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council
- Nevada Congressional delegation
- Native American Tribes, bands and individuals
- Local media
- General public

One Week Prior to Publication of the Notice:

- Interested stakeholders will be sent postcards notifying them of the public comment period and will be invited to provide comments as well as attend public hearings.

Date of Publication of the Notice in the Federal Register:

- Distribute news release to statewide media and Nevada Congressional delegation announcing the publication of the NOA.
- Post the pdf file of the Draft RMP/EIS, the Federal Register notice and news release on the BLM Southern Nevada District Web page

**INFORMATION / BRIEFING MEMORANDUM
FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

DATE: April 6, 2017

FROM: Michael D. Nedd, Acting Director Bureau of Land Management
John F. Ruhs, Nevada State Director

SUBJECT: Supplemental Draft Resource Management Plan covering the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, including Gold Butte National Monument

The purpose of this memo is to provide a status update on the Supplemental Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area and to confirm approval for publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register to re initiate this planning effort via a Supplemental Draft RMP.

KEY FACTS

Jobs: Management decisions such as permits, available recreational activities, and land disposals arising out of the land use planning process may affect numerous jobs in the region, especially by providing certainty for business decisions and local government planning. The socio economic impact analysis in the RMP will address the effects on regional basis; however, detailed analyses would be conducted through subsequent project specific NEPA reviews.

Stakeholder Positions: Discussed below under the descriptions of *Prominent Issues and Positions of Interested Parties*.

Public Lands Affected: Approximately 3.0 million acres located in Clark County and the southern portion of Nye County (see maps attached and *Background* below).

BACKGROUND

The RMP covering the BLM Southern Nevada District Planning Area is under revision from its prior version completed in 1998. The Planning Area encompasses approximately 3.0 million acres, located in Clark County and the southern portion of Nye County (see map attached). The Las Vegas metro area (population 2.3 million) is situated in the center of the Planning Area, accentuating the intensive public interest in BLM activities and management there.

The RMP does not cover: private lands, State lands, Indian reservations, Federal lands not administered by the BLM, Nellis Test and Training Range (U.S. Air Force), or lands addressed in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2005) and the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area RMP (2006).

The RMP process is currently between the public Draft and the Administrative Final RMP phases. The Proposed RMP and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that has been under development was paused for internal review in July 2016. This procedural pause was based upon concerns and issues raised by our many partners, stakeholders, and the public affected by this RMP (see *Discussion* below). During the latter half of 2016, the Nevada State Office coordinated with the Washington Office Planning Division and the Solicitors, and determined that a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, with a new 60 day public scoping period, would be the best approach to address the concerns and issues raised.

The Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS will also address the recent designation of the Gold Butte National Monument (GBNM), which covers 296,937 acres in the planning area. As required under BLM Manual 6220, the Division of National Lands Conservation System was consulted about the planning approach for GBNM and concurs, in accordance with BLM Manual 6220, that GBNM could be incorporated into a single RMP with separate Records of Decision published for GBNM and the remainder of the Planning Area.

The GBNM portion of the Planning Area (see attached map) will be analyzed under the Special Designations section of the RMP, consistent with standard organization of RMP documents. On February 9, 2017, the BLM Southern Nevada District Office conducted a public information meeting about GBNM, held at Mesquite City Hall, in Mesquite, Nevada, with about 180 participants and extensive news coverage. An additional public information meeting was held on March 29, 2017, at Moapa Valley Town Advisory Board, an unincorporated community near the western boundary of GBNM.

- Draft RMP, public documents in ePlanning, Land Use Register
https://planning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite/do?methodName_renderDefaultPlanOrProject&siteId=2900
- Gold Butte National Monument webpage, including a map and the designating Proclamation
<http://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/national-monuments/nevada>

DISCUSSION

Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS

The purpose of the supplemental public scoping process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft RMP/EIS was made available in October 2014 for public and Cooperating Agency review, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of the GBNM, and the BLM Final Solar and Wind Rule (November 10, 2016). Comments already received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS have been analyzed and will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, and such consideration will be highlighted prominently during upcoming public scoping meetings and other outreach.

(b)(5) DPP

As indicated in the Notice of Intent, the scope of the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS for the whole Southern Nevada District Planning Area would concern the specific issues of:

- solar energy zones and solar development,

- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs),
- lands with wilderness characteristics,
- land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals),
- socio economics, and
- site specific GBNM issues, such as recreational access, permitting, and resource protection, and as consistent with the designating Proclamation.

Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agencies that participated actively in the initial Draft RMP/EIS in 2014 2015, and subsequent review of the Proposed RMP/Administrative Final EIS in 2016, include: five municipalities (all of them in the planning area), both counties (Clark and Nye), one tribe (Moapa Band of Piutes), three State agencies (including Governor's Office), and eight Federal agencies (including Nellis Air Force Base and several Interior bureaus). Thirteen tribal governments or related groups also were consulted or contacted, in addition to the regional BLM Resource Advisory Council (Mo So RAC).

During late 2015 and early 2016, many of these Cooperating Agencies (particularly local governments) provided additional input and written comments as BLM drafted the Proposed RMP. Substantive comments from this recent input informed us on the need for the Supplemental RMP, especially on socio economics and land tenure adjustments. All of the Cooperating Agencies will be re engaged as the RMP advances. Focused outreach to the City of Mesquite and the Virgin Valley Water District (a new Cooperating Agency) also will occur, as these agencies serve the area immediately north of Gold Butte National Monument.

Prominent Issues and Positions of Interested Parties

(b)(5) DPP

As mentioned above, several aspects of the initial Draft RMP/EIS received substantive comments and significant public interest, summarized below for some of the more prominent issues and their status in the current administrative draft of the PRMP/FEIS. These issues are drivers that warrant the need for a Supplemental RMP.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern: The current draft identifies 37 ACECs (retain 21 existing and establish 17 new) that were nominated internally and externally. To address landscape planning continuity with ACECs across the California border, the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS and the PRMP/FEIS will include an additional map exhibit that depicts planning continuity with the contiguous Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), recently completed by BLM in September 2016. Depending on the stakeholder perspective, designation of ACECs may allow for additional protection of natural resources (mainly sensitive species or cultural sites) or be considered a hindrance to energy development, recreation, rights of ways, and/or lands for disposal.

Land Disposals: The current Proposed RMP identifies 118,466 acres for disposal, of which 59,174 acres are legislatively designated or required. The lands identified for disposal have been

reduced in the Proposed RMP from the No Action and Preferred Alternatives of the Draft RMP, mainly because of concerns regarding the possible adverse effects to groundwater dependent species, such as the endangered Devils Hole Pupfish and Moapa Dace. The two County governments have expressed concern that the reduction in areas for disposal would limit future urban development opportunities unless the RMP were amended in future years to allow for additional or different land disposal areas. For the mainly Nye County portion of the RMP planning area, a groundwater model is being prepared by US Geological Survey (<http://nevada.usgs.gov/water/studyareas/samm.htm>), with internal and scientific peer review now completed and a final report by USGS anticipated for publication in late spring 2017, which is expected to inform substantially on the Supplemental RMP. The Clark County portion of the planning area is largely covered by other groundwater models approved by the Nevada State Engineer, the agency with jurisdiction over water resources.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics: The initial Draft RMP/EIS identified 21 areas or units (242,214 acres total) that possess wilderness character, based upon field work completed during 2010 2011 and largely focusing on units that were nominated then by public advocacy organizations. Public comments subsequently received on the initial Draft RMP/EIS in 2015 correctly indicated that BLM had not completed a comprehensive wilderness character inventory for the entire Planning Area, to be consistent with BLM Manual 6310. In response to these substantive public comments, additional inventory field work has been conducted, and the entire inventory for the Planning Area may be finished by late 2017. Consistent with BLM Manual 6320, the Supplemental RMP process will identify which inventoried units are to be managed for wilderness character versus other options for multiple uses, following scoping and public comment. Depending on the stakeholder perspective, these land use decisions may allow for protection of wilderness character or be considered a hindrance to mineral and renewable energy development, recreation, rights of way, and/or lands for disposal.

Renewable Energy: In addition to the two existing Solar Energy Zones (SEZ) identified in the Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS (2012), which amended the currently applicable RMP (1998), the Proposed RMP identifies three additional SEZs. The PRMP considered the 2015 solar energy market analysis by National Renewable Energy Laboratory. With input from the BLM Zonal Economist, the Proposed RMP also is incorporating current socio economic conditions discussed with local Cooperating Agencies. Public workshops conducted by BLM to address solar energy issues are anticipated to be held in mid 2017 as focused discussions during the scoping meetings. Positions of stakeholder groups are outlined below.

- **Environmental Groups.** Some organizations have expressed concerns that the identification protocols in the Solar Development PEIS (2012) for identifying new SEZs were not followed and that the Draft RMP/EIS did not provide sufficient NEPA analysis of the resource impacts of the alternatives.
- **Solar Industry.** Some industry groups have also expressed concerns that the new proposed SEZs were located without industry input and would be cost prohibitive, and that the proposed SEZs did not provide for connectivity to nearby electric transmission

corridors. Additionally, the number of acres for exclusion has increased and the solar variance areas have decreased from the Solar Development PEIS (2012) and may be perceived by industry as limiting the opportunity for development.

- **Tribal Governments.** During early January 2017, a concept was proposed via BLM Washington Office where Moapa tribal lands also could be addressed in the Supplemental RMP concerning solar energy issues. That approach may be feasible considering the nexus to electric transmission and solar development on the surrounding BLM lands. However, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) would remain under NEPA as the Lead Federal Agency for any specific project on Moapa tribal lands but BIA later could adopt or tier off the FEIS prepared by BLM.

Other Issues: Several other key issues have emerged during the initial planning process, and are highlighted below. They always have been prominent issues and are not necessarily driving the specific needs for a Supplemental RMP but will be addressed in the PRMP/FEIS.

- **Travel and Transportation.** The current administrative draft of the PRMP/FEIS changes and clarifies off highway vehicle (OHV) allocations from “Limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes” to “Limited to designated routes” which includes thousands of miles of existing routes in the Planning Area. These proposed allocations may be considered by some public stakeholders as a way to restrict access to public lands, and were a prominent topic of the public comments from 2015 and earlier. Consistent with updated policy (Manual 1626), travel management will be completed as an implementation level plan after the RMP is concluded. The travel management plan for the area of the GBNM and the adjacent ACEC is already complete since 2008 and will expedite the planning efforts for the GBNM area.
- **Recreational Target Shooting Closure.** The PRMP administrative draft currently features an additional 17,824 acres of closure area within the proposed Logandale Special Recreation Management Area. This proposed Recreation Management Area (see blue area on attached map) features an extensive network of Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) trails, near a growing suburban area in the unincorporated town of Moapa Valley. The purpose of the proposed shooting closure, which does not affect hunting, is to protect persons and property in this intensively used recreation area at an urban interface. This proposed closure was coordinated with the national Shooting Sports Roundtable group. Additional comments received earlier for the Draft RMP stated a preference for no shooting closures and wanted the BLM to find other means to manage or control shooting, such as developing specific recreational shooting sites; however, the current BLM management practice in Nevada is that areas generally are open to shooting by default, unless they are specifically closed.
- **Minerals.** A Minerals Potential Report has been completed for the Planning Area, which informs on options considered for the RMP. For fluid minerals leasing, when compared with the Preferred Alternative in the initial Draft RMP, the current administrative draft of

the PRMP/FEIS includes additional areas open to fluid minerals leasing with stipulations for No Surface Occupancy. Southern Nevada, however, shows minimal potential for oil and gas development. For mineral material sites, gravel and aggregate would remain available through the standard permitting process with the appropriate County.

NEXT STEPS

Publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register will initiate the scoping process for the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS. After scoping and further coordination with Cooperating Agencies and other stakeholders, a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS would be published for public comment, followed by a Proposed RMP/Final EIS, and eventually two separate Records of Decision (tentative schedule below).

Upon approval of the Notice of Intent, we will estimate dates and determine venues for four or five public scoping meetings to be held throughout the Planning Area, including a meeting in Mesquite (closest city and gateway community) to highlight issues most pertinent to GBNM.

Status & Schedule

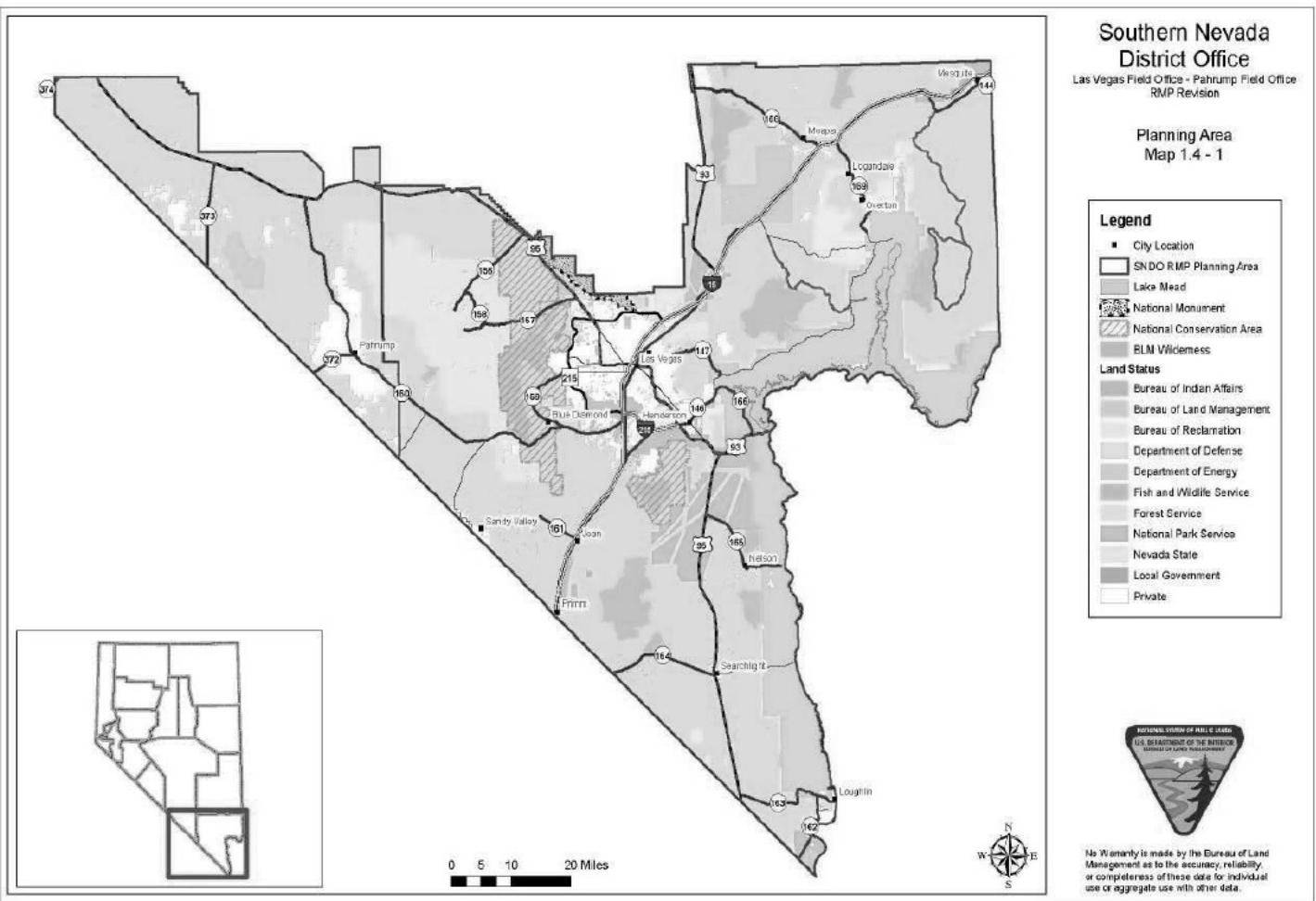
▪ Initial Public Scoping and Notice of Intent	Jan. 2010
▪ Initial Draft RMP and Notice of Availability	Oct. 2014
▪ Initial Public Comment Period Ended (150 days)	Mar. 2015
▪ Admin. Draft Alternatives for PRMP presented to Cooperating Agencies	May 2016
▪ Admin. Draft Alternatives for PRMP reviewed by Nevada State Office	June 2016
▪ RMP process paused for internal review	July 2016
▪ <i>Supplemental Public Scoping and NOI (60-day comment period begins)</i>	TBD
▪ Admin. version, Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, potential completion	Feb. 2018
▪ Public version, Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS, potential Notice of Availability	April 2018
▪ Admin. Draft Proposed RMP/Final EIS potential completion	Sep. 2018
▪ Proposed RMP/Final EIS, potential review by Washington Office	Sep. 2018
▪ Proposed RMP/Final EIS potential Notice of Availability, start Protest Period	Nov. 2018
▪ Potential Record of Decision, covering Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices	FY19
▪ Potential Record of Decision, covering Gold Butte National Monument	FY20

ATTACHMENTS

- Map of Southern Nevada District Planning Area
- Map of proposed Recreation Management Areas, including Logandale SRMA
- Map of Gold Butte National Monument

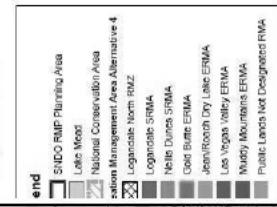


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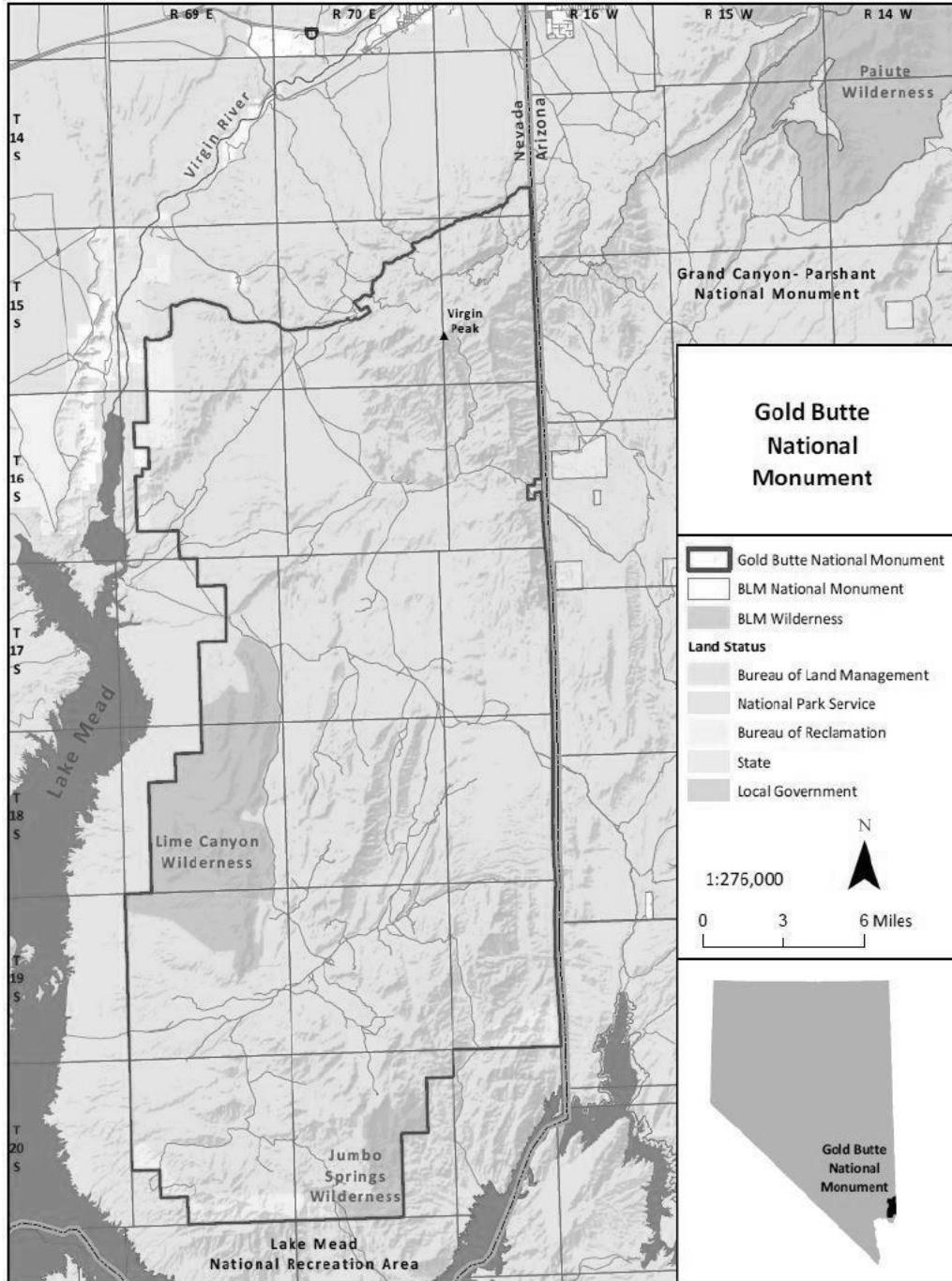


Southern Nevada
District Office
Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas Field Office
RMP Revision

Administration Management Area
Alternative - 4
Map 2.6.2.4 - B



This map is made by the Bureau of Land Management
and is intended for public use.
It is not suitable for surveying or navigation.
Accuracy is not guaranteed.



Briefing Paper
Departmental Clearance

Title of Document: **Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Associated Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southern Nevada District Planning Area, comprising the Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices and Gold Butte National Monument**

RIN, if applicable: [Click here](#) to enter a RIN, if applicable.

Popular Short Name, if applicable: Southern Nevada Supplemental RMP

Summary (Clearly and very briefly explain what the document does and, if applicable, where the subject of the document is located):

The Notice of Intent (NoI) for Federal Register publication is the method to launch the Supplemental RMP and its EIS, and invite public comment, thereby re-initiating the planning process after an internal review during the past few months. After scoping and further coordination with Cooperating Agencies and other stakeholders, a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS would be published for public comment, followed by a PRMP/FEIS, and eventually two separate Records of Decision (tentative schedule in the Briefing Memo).

Is timing critical? Yes No

If yes, date the document must publish or other action must occur: 4/14/2017

What is driving the timing? Scheduled Event

What happens if the deadline is missed?

The timing or date is intended to advance this planning process in a timely manner to serve the public so the Resource Management Plan can be continued with new scoping based on recently emerging issues.

Background: *[Briefly provide any background information, in understandable language, that will help a reader quickly understand what the document is trying to do and why, along with additional information that is useful. Assume the reader knows little about the subject matter. Minimize use of acronyms or abbreviations and do not use them at all unless they are clearly defined. Is the document a high-profile, litigated matter?]*

As indicated in the Notice of Intent, the scope of the Supplemental Draft Resource Management Plan (and its associated Environmental Impact Statement) is limited the specific issues of solar energy zones and solar development, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, lands with wilderness characteristics, land tenure adjustments (i.e., land disposals), and socio-economics within the Southern Nevada District planning area (maps in the Briefing Memo). For the geographic area of Gold Butte National Monument (296,937 acres), the scope will consider a broad range of planning issues and criteria, such as recreational access, permitting, and resource protection, as consistent with the designating Proclamation (December 2016) and not addressed in the initial plan.

The purpose of the supplemental planning process is to incorporate substantive comments received since the initial Draft plan was made available in October 2014, and to incorporate new information, field data, and changing circumstances, such as recent Federal land transfers, designation of Gold Butte National Monument, and the BLM Final Solar and Wind Rule (November 2016). Comments already received will continue to be considered for the Supplemental Draft plan.

Issues: *[Controversial? What are the significant issues, who will care, and how strongly will they care?]*

The Las Vegas metro area (population 2.3 million) is situated in the center of the planning area, accentuating the intensive, strong public interest in BLM activities and management there. Positions of interested parties are described in the Briefing Memo.

Communications:

BLM will produce standard news releases highlighting the content of the Notice of Intent. Public outreach strategies will include standard and required methods, such as distribution of news releases and website posting, and 4 or 5 public meetings throughout the southern Nevada region, as part of the formal scoping process. The BLM will perform outreach with the following groups: Cooperating agencies, Mojave Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council, Nevada Congressional delegation, Native American Tribes and individual members, Local media, and General public.

Is there an information collection associated with this document? Yes No

If yes, does it have a currently approved OMB Control Number? Yes No

OMB Control Number(s): [Click here](#) to enter OMB Control Number.

Does the document require a new OMB Control Number or a renewal of an existing approval?

If a new number or renewal is required, what is the current status? [Click here](#) to explain status.

If a regulatory action, has it been on a 90-Day List for the current stage? Yes No

If yes, on which 90-Day List did it first appear at the current stage?

[Click here](#) to enter response.

Did OIRA provide comments or change the significance? Yes No

If yes, summarize comments and resolution.

[Click here](#) to summarize OIRA comments and DOI response.

This approval is to go to the Federal Register for publication. OIRA for review.

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